News item regarding RBI nudging down rupee

2893. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news item appearing in the Time of India of 20th June, 1996 under the caption "RBI nudging down rupees".

(b) if so, the reaction of Government there to; and

(c) the quantity of dollars purchased by RBI from the market during the last three years in order to stabilise the exchange value of rupee vis-a-vis dollars?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government and the RBI monitor the exchange rate developments continuously and appropriate measures are taken, as and when necessary, to maintain orderly market conditions as well as to ensure that the exchange rate of the rupee remains consistent with macroecohomic fundamentals.

(c) Purchases of U.S. dollars by the Reserve Bank of India from the authorised dealers during 1993-94 to 1995-96 were as follows:

Years	U.S. $ in billion
1993-94	13.9
1994-95	10.3
1995-96	3.6

Policy of RBI in cases of Interest Waivers

2894. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of Reserve Bank of India in cases of interest waivers in the banks;

(b) whether Government will consider issuing guidelines for interest waivers to all banks wherever a borrower comes forward to settle the loans instead of leaving the discretion
to banks; and

(c) whether complaints have been received that banks are discriminating in using their discretion leading to large scale corruption?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have issued circular instructions to all public sector banks in July, 1986, Oct., 1992 and July, 1995 regarding writing off of bad debts/losses, compromise proposals and negotiated settlement, etc. Banks are expected to follow these instructions scrupulously.

(c) RBI's data monitoring system does not generate information in this form. However as and when such complaints are received these are investigated and remedial measures are taken. RBI had scrutinised top ten compromise proposal during Annual Financial Inspections of Nationalised Banks and no malifide was observed.

Shortage of helicopters in Pawan Hans

2895. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pawan Hans," due to shortage of helicopters for offshore operations, can not meet fully the demands from ONGC:

(b) as a result of the above, ONGC has started giving its business to private operations;

(c) Pawan Hans, is therefore, suffering a loss, which can be avoided by expanding its fleet;

(d) whether Pawan Hans plan to expand its fleet;

(e) if so, what are the broad outlines of the plan and framework of its implementation; and

(f) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CM. IBRAHIM): (a) Pawan Hans Limited (now renamed as Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited) has adequate medium category helicopters to meet the demands of ONGC. However, at present it does not have heavy duty helicopters to meet ONGC requirements. Two such helicopters have been ordered for and are likely to be delivered by end of October, 1996.

(b) ONGC at present has a total requirement of 12 medium and 2 large helicopters. Against this, Pawan Hans has provided 11 medium and